



## ***TASK FORCE LIBERTY*** ***Press Release***

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**FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, TIKRIT, Iraq** – As Task Force Liberty and Iraqi Security Forces operations work to still the sounds of violence in North Central Iraq, the voices of the Iraqi people grow louder. As the month of August draws to a close, more than 220,000 Iraqis have come forward to register for the upcoming referendum vote and election.

Debate, however discordant, thrives in the face of the insurgency, and Iraq's diverse elements are working in concert toward the upcoming constitutional referendum and the ultimate goal of Operation Iraqi Freedom – Iraqi autonomy.

### **Breaking the Cycle of Violence**

In the last two weeks, operations in the Task Force Liberty area of operations have resulted in five anti-Iraqi forces killed, six wounded, and 351 detained. Significant ammunition seized included six rockets, 160 mortars, 239 artillery rounds, 38 tank rounds, 57 small arms weapons and grenades, 3,490 small arms ammunition, seven mines, 10 rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) launchers, and 43 RPG rounds. Major equipment captured included three machine guns, 100 anti-aircraft rounds, 25 pounds of explosives, 25 pounds of propellant, 84 assorted fuses, two ballistic vests and five artillery weapon systems. Task Force Liberty operations also seized 400,000 Iraqi dinar and 5,000 U.S. dollars. Within the division's area of responsibility, 80 improvised explosive devices were discovered prior to detonation, preventing the needless loss of life at the hands of Saddamists, Iraqi rejectionists or terrorists.

**1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team (Raider).** A local Iraqi citizen stopped a car bomb from killing innocent people in Tikrit Aug. 16. The civilian waved down a passing Tikriti Police patrol and told them about a suspicious car parked on a nearby street. The

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patrol called in a bomb squad to check the vehicle which was found to be a car bomb. The Iraqi police cordoned off the area and, with the assistance of a Coalition Forces explosive ordnance disposal team, detonated the car bomb in place. The Tikrit Fire Department put out the flames and conducted the initial cleanup.

The Salah Ad Din Provincial Highway Patrol appointed a new chief to secure the roadways of the province. Col. Ibrahim Khalaff Nutlik al Juboori took control of the Highway Patrol in early August. Col. Ibrahim was the chief of the Tikrit 911 Police Station and brings his experience from that position to the highway patrol.

Police officers from the Tikrit Main Police Station spoke with residents of Abdujail while investigating recent mortar and rocket attacks on a Coalition Forces base Aug. 13. The Iraqi police gathered information from civilians which will be used in the capture of those responsible for the attacks.

Iraqis in Balad are readying for the upcoming elections by improving security of polling sites. The Balad Youth Center, a registration site for the elections, was made more secure recently. Barriers were placed around the building to protect it from suicide car bomb attacks, considered one of the most dangerous weapons in the terrorists' arsenal.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team (Sledgehammer).** Governance and infrastructure efforts continued in the 3<sup>rd</sup> BCT's sector throughout August.

The Al Abarra governing council met in mid-August to discuss the upcoming registration and election process in order to facilitate a safe and successful operation. City council members distributed posters advertising registration sites and encouraging local citizens to exercise their voting rights. Representatives of the Independent Election Committee of Iraq provided information necessary in preparing polling sites and monitored the council's decisions to ensure they were in correspondence with federal guidelines.

The Baqubah City Council, representing over 700,000 people, met Aug. 20 to address common needs of their citizenry and to make progress on political and economic development for their areas. The mayor of Muqdadiyah visited the mayor of Wajihyah Aug. 25 during the Wajihyah City Council meeting. The group explored

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common ground between the two cities on issues such as the upcoming referendum, security and ongoing reconstruction projects.

Soldiers of Task Force 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry attended the completion celebration of the Zurhairat canal Aug. 7. The canal will be used primarily to irrigate farmland and bring drinking water city to the city. The canal once flowed unfettered through the city, bringing a host of environmental and safety hazards, including disease and erosion. It is now a useful and aesthetic masterpiece of architecture.

Battalion Soldiers also made an unannounced visit to the Al-Taiyer School mid-August to survey the progress on the construction. Defying the four-month deadline to complete the project, the contractor vowed to have half the school completed in time for the children to begin the year, and the other half completed two weeks later. This school educates nearly 600 children.

**116<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team (Warrior).** The 116<sup>th</sup> BCT's mission to improve security, political stability and economic progress in Kirkuk Province continued Aug. 13-26 as political dialogue moved to center stage alongside security operations.

The past two weeks were filled with numerous brigade operations in support of improved security, economic development, governance and communication as Iraq moved closer to agreeing on its draft constitution.

Training and operations of Iraqi security forces, progressed during the past 14 days. Iraqi army units executed another command post exercise to train their battle staff. Units have focused on mission-essential task training and evaluation, including squad-level movement techniques. The units also worked with local educators to plan literacy classes for Iraqi army soldiers.

Iraqi security forces operations during the past two weeks have centered on the joint IPS-IA voter registration site security mission, with policemen and soldiers working side by side to protect the safety of citizens. The Iraqi army helped Yayachi Police with traffic control points. Iraqi army forces in the Dibis area successfully engaged terrorists. Other Iraqi army units uncovered a weapons cache at an Azadi voter registration site. Iraqi soldiers provided security for the Regional Governor's Conference Aug. 24 at the Iraqi army's K1 facility near Kirkuk.

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Development of the economy and key infrastructure in Kirkuk are a priority for area leaders. The 116<sup>th</sup> BCT's economics team presented a list of provincial water projects drafted by the Provincial Reconstruction and Development Committee to the provincial council. Current large projects in progress include the Kirkuk landfill, and other water and sewer projects. Also construction and renovation projects for public facilities are continuing. The city of Klaw Qut is now getting clean water.

The Kirkuk Provincial Council is making progress since it negotiated an agreement among the groups for all major political blocks to participate in the council and its committees. Several council members voted to approve the project lists submitted by the Provincial Reconstruction and Development Committee. That action will move forward the funding and improvement of numerous key water projects throughout the province. Several peaceful demonstrations throughout the province over the recent assassination of a prominent doctor and concerns over the proposed federal structure of Iraq point to an engaged, but peaceful populous that is trying to resolve problems.

The Iraqi Media Network hosted television programs with local guests and police officials discussing topics including Islam and democracy, voter registration, the power of the vote and constitutional debates. Regional governors from the provinces of Diyala, Saladin, Sulaymaniyah and Kirkuk met with the press following their conference Aug. 24 at the Iraqi army's K1 facility near Kirkuk. They fielded questions regarding displaced Iraqis, voter participation and inter-provincial security, among other topics. Regular press conferences are also held by the Kirkuk Provincial Council after their weekly meetings.

**278<sup>th</sup> Regimental Combat Team (The Volunteers).** The 278<sup>th</sup> Regimental Combat Team (RCT) from the Tennessee Army National Guard maintains its operational tempo through joint operations and missions with the Iraqi Security Forces.

On Aug. 19, soldiers from the 278<sup>th</sup> RCT logged their 10,000th combat patrol in Operation Iraqi Freedom. The patrol was a joint cordon and knock operation with Soldiers from 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron, 278<sup>th</sup> RCT and the Iraqi army in Dabaj. The patrol was part of Operation Middle Creek, an effort to interdict terrorist cells planting roadside bombs.

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The 278<sup>th</sup> RCT has also been mentoring the Iraqis on the importance of their economy. In Khanaqin, Iraq, the mentoring has paid off and improving the local economy has become a top priority. A recent meeting, hosted by the Khanaqin mayor, addressed economic development and was attended by Capt. Jim Reed, commander of I Troop, 3<sup>rd</sup> Squadron, the unit's economic advisor and the Khanaqin city engineer. The opening of a business center and a co-op at the grain silo were topics also discussed. The mayor agreed to allow the business center to initially open in a city building until a permanent location is found. The city engineer will run the co-op and is already thinking of ways to get other agencies involved in improving Khanaqin's economy.

On Aug. 9, a step forward was taken in the relationship among the various branches of the Iraqi security forces. The Department of Border Enforcement and Brig. General Nazim joined Maj. General Jamal, the deputy minister of Iraqi Police Affairs for the Diyala and Kirkuk Region to meet with local government officials and tour the Khanaqin area in search for office space for an Iraqi police affairs office. The mayor reported that land will be given to Jamal to construct a new building. The office will assist in managing Iraqi police stations throughout the Diyala and Kirkuk regions.

**42<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Brigade (Detonator).** Members of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division Engineer Brigade have been busy supporting the division with the counter-IED mission, troop construction and a variety of reconstruction projects to ensure the Iraqi people's governance and economic stability.

Task Force Trail Blazer is patrolling the roads to find IEDs. Since Aug. 12, Trail Blazer has found 41 IEDs.

The 793<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Utility Detachment and C Company, 983<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Battalion are reshaping the battlefield and our FOBs in preparation for the relief-in-place. They've begun 20 new troop construction projects, and completed 11 troop construction projects in the last two weeks. The American-Samoa based 793<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Utility Detachment began the daunting mission of closing FOB Danger and returning the former palace grounds to the Iraqi people. From the division main project on FOB Speicher to life support projects at FOBs O'Ryan, Warhorse and McKenzie, the construction engineers are demonstrating their can-do attitudes and strong civilian skills to ensure mission

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success. In addition, the heavy engineers have completed a variety of force protection tasks for FOBs Danger, MacKenzie, Wilson, Remagen, Speicher, Summerall, McHenry and Gains Mills.

**42<sup>nd</sup> Division Support Command (Muleskinner).** Division Support Command (DISCOM) maintained operations and provided support to both the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division and Iraqi Security Forces. Task Force Exodus is now in full swing, with theater assets moving equipment to Camp Victory, Kuwait and on to port. The 1035<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company has the difficult task of prepping these pieces of equipment and getting them on ships. The Division Material Management Center Iraqi security forces cell is pushing equipment, ammunition and supplies to Iraqi security forces, while maintaining accountability of this equipment. Iraqi security forces are set to assume greater responsibility throughout Iraq. With elections coming, Iraqi security forces cell is prepared to remain extremely busy. Iraqi equipment is rolling in and through direct coordination with the G-3 Iraqi security forces cell.

The 50<sup>th</sup> Main Support Battalion conducted a total of 58 missions during the past week with 13 convoys to FOBs Warrior, Danger, Summerall, Bernstein, McKenzie, and Anaconda. The total mileage covered for the entire tour recently passed 976,248. The main support battalion keeps their wheels rolling across the dangerous road network of Iraq, and has sustained terrorist attacks on several convoys. The scope of missions has greatly increased with the addition of Iraqi security forces equipment requirements and early retrograde operations.

In the area of maintenance, the main support battalion completed over 100 work orders. Additionally, they pushed 108 gallons of fuel to the FOBs. Their water purification teams remain at remote locations such as Bernstein, Cobra and Olson, producing potable water for units.

### **Conclusion**

Task Force Liberty and our Iraqi security forces partners are providing a safe and secure Iraq. We are working with the Iraqi security forces to neutralize the insurgency.

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We believe in the future of Iraq. To our families, friends, employers and the American people, Task Force Liberty thanks you for your steadfast support and encouragement.

***Never Forget!***

**For more information on the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division and Task Force Liberty:**

**[www.42id.army.mil](http://www.42id.army.mil)**